

**Information for the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders
Regarding a Doctor of Speech-Language Pathology Degree Program**

I. Purpose

In order to carry out the mission of a regional university, VSU is considering expanding its program offerings to include a Doctor of Speech-Language Pathology (SLPD). This report, prepared by the Office of Strategic Research and Analysis, contains summaries of data describing the current situation and need for this degree in Georgia and the VSU service area. The University System of Georgia, Georgia Department of Labor, and published literature provided resources to assist the evaluation of need, current providers, and capacity for a Speech-Language Pathology doctorate degree program at VSU.

II. Georgia Institutions Offering Graduate Degrees in a Communication Sciences and Disorders Related Fields

Five institutions within the University System of Georgia have graduate programs in Communication Sciences and Disorders or related degrees. Table 1 contains University System of Georgia (USG) institutions which offer these programs.

Table 1: Georgia Institutions Offering Graduate Level Communication Sciences and Disorders Related Degrees

Type of Degree	Major	School/University
Master of Science	Communication Sciences and Disorders	Armstrong Atlantic State University
Master of Education	Communication Disorders	Georgia State University
Doctor of Philosophy	Communication Studies	
Master of Arts	Communication Sciences and Disorders	University of Georgia
Master of Education	Communication Sciences and Disorders	
Specialist in Education	Communication Sciences and Disorders	
Doctor of Philosophy	Communication Sciences and Disorders	
Master of Education	Speech-Language Pathology	University of West Georgia
Master of Education	Communication Disorders	Valdosta State University

Source: USG Degrees and Majors (2009) <https://app.usg.edu/portal/page/portal/DMA> and private institution websites.

In addition to institutions in Georgia listed in Table 1, neighboring institutions award these degrees: Florida State University (Tallahassee), 80 miles from Valdosta, offers a Doctor of Philosophy, a Master of Science, and an Advanced Master in Communication Sciences and Disorders. The University of Florida (Gainesville), 114 miles from Valdosta, offers a Doctor of Audiology, a Doctor of Philosophy in Communication Sciences and Disorders, and a Master of Arts in Communicative Disorders.

III. USG Enrollment Trends

Five of the thirty-five (14.3%) USG institutions offer graduate level Communication Sciences and Disorders related degrees (as listed in Table 1). The most recent program enrollment available, from Fall 2008, places USG System enrollment in these majors at 327, as displayed in Table 2. The enrollment in these programs over a five-year period grew at an average of 6.6% per year, so one could forecast enrollment to be approximately 372 students throughout the USG System in Fall 2010.

Table 2: USG Enrollment in Graduate Level Communication Sciences and Disorders Related Degrees, 2004-2008

USG Program	Enrollment					Average
	Fall 2004	Fall 2005	Fall 2006	Fall 2007	Fall 2008	
M.S. Communication Sciences and Disorders (AASU)	0	0	0	0	6	1
M.Ed. Communication Disorders (GSU)	42	43	48	50	52	47
Ph.D. Communication Studies (GSU)	46	50	52	54	55	51
M.A. Communication Sciences and Disorders (UGA)	3	1	2	3	3	2
M. Ed. Communication Sciences and Disorders (UGA)	34	55	72	66	64	58
Ed.S. Communication Sciences and Disorders (UGA)	0	1	2	3	2	2
Ph.D. in Communication Sciences and Disorders (UGA)	4	3	4	3	2	3
M.Ed. Speech-Language Pathology (UWG)	33	35	43	42	43	39
M.Ed. Communication Disorders (VSU)	95	81	102	116	100	99
Total	257	269	325	337	327	303

Source: [USG Five-Year Enrollment Trends 2004-2008](#).

IV. USG Degrees Conferred by Program and Year

Table 3 shows the number of degrees awarded by fiscal year and institution. The four¹ USG institutions offering a graduate level Communication Sciences and Disorders related degree have awarded 335 graduate degrees during the past three fiscal years for an average of 112 degrees per year.

¹ Degrees awarded by Armstrong Atlantic State University were unavailable.

Table 3: USG Degrees Conferred by Year, 2007-2009

Program (Institution)	CIP Code 09.0101/51.0201/ 52.0203			Total
	Communication Studies/ Communication Disorders/ Speech-Language Pathology			
	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	
M.Ed. Communication Disorders (GSU)	24	14	18	56
Ph.D. Communication Studies (GSU)	11	1	1	13
M.A./M.Ed. Communication Sciences and Disorders (UGA)	19	25	19	63
Ed.S. Communication Sciences and Disorders (UGA)	0	1	1	2
Ph.D. in Communication Sciences and Disorders (UGA)	0	1	0	1
M.Ed. Speech-Language Pathology (UWG)	14	11	17	42
M.Ed. Communication Disorders (VSU)	45	53	60	158
Total	113	106	116	335

Source: USG Degrees Conferred Report, FY 2007-2009.

V. Potential Candidates

As previously mentioned, few institutions in the USG offer a Communication Sciences and Disorders related master's degree. Table 3 contains program enrollment numbers for USG institutions which offer a Communication Sciences and Disorders or related master's degree. Students graduating from the programs in Table 3 would be potential candidates if VSU offered a Doctor of Speech-Language Pathology program. The number of Communication Sciences and Disorders related master's level enrollment recorded by the USG has risen 30.4% since 2004 which could indicate a growing popularity in this major. In addition to students currently enrolled in master's programs within USG, currently employed Speech-Language Pathologists within Georgia school systems would also be likely candidates. Table 4 shows the number of Speech-Language Pathologists within Georgia. The surrounding VSU area comprises 7.2% of the state's Speech-Language Pathologists.

Table 4: Speech-Language Pathologists in Georgia, 2009

Area	Number Employed
VSU Area*	130
All Other Counties	1,674
Total	1,810

Source: [Open Georgia](#)

*VSU Area includes the counties of Atkinson, Berrien, Brooks, Clinch, Coffee, Colquitt, Cook, Echols, Irwin, Lanier, Lowndes, Thomas, Tift, and Ware. This area also includes the cities of Thomasville and Valdosta.

VI. Potential Careers and Occupations

Students who graduate with a Speech-Language Pathology doctorate degree could obtain positions in the following fields within Speech-Language Pathology (Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2010):

- Education Services: Speech-Language Pathologists in schools collaborate with teachers, special educators, interpreters, other school personnel, and parents to develop and implement individual or group programs, provide counseling, and support classroom activities.
- Healthcare: In medical facilities, Speech-Language Pathologists may perform their job in conjunction with physicians, social workers, psychologists, and other therapists.
- Other Social Assistance Facilities: Some Speech-Language Pathologists conduct research on how people communicate. Others design and develop equipment or techniques for diagnosing and treating speech disorders.

VII. Occupational Outlook

An extensive explanation about [Speech-Language Pathologists](#), including employment and earnings, is featured in the *Occupational Outlook Handbook 2010-11*. The handbook includes information on the nature of work, training, employment, job outlook, projections, and earnings for the listed positions.

VIII. National Employment and Outlook (2008 to 2018)

The *Occupational Outlook Handbook* (2010) states:

Speech-Language Pathologists held about 119,300 jobs in 2008. About 48 percent were employed in educational services. Others were employed in hospitals; offices of other health practitioners, including Speech-Language Pathologists; nursing care facilities; home healthcare services; individual and family services; outpatient care centers; and child day care centers. Nine percent of Speech-Language Pathologists were self-employed in 2008. They contract and provide services in schools, offices of physicians, hospitals, or nursing care facilities, or work as consultants to industry (OOH, 2010, para. 17-18).

Job growth for Speech-Language Pathologists is expected to grow at a faster than average rate of 19% from 2008-2018. Within the field of Speech-Language Pathology, job growth for Speech-Language Pathologists is expected to be strongest in educational and healthcare services (OOH, 2010, para. 19 & 23). Table 5 shows the projected employment change for Speech-Language Pathologists from 2008-2018.

Table 5: Projections Data from the National Employment Matrix, 2008 to 2018

Occupational Title	Employment, 2008	Projected Employment, 2018	Change, 2008-18		Detailed Statistics
			Number	Percent	
Speech-Language Pathologist	119,300	141,400	22,100	19	[PDF]

Source: Occupational Outlook Handbook 2010-11, <http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos049.htm>

IX. Georgia Labor Demand and Wages

Current wages for occupations in which graduates with a doctorate in Speech-Language Pathology could work were extracted from the *2008 Georgia Wage Survey*, published by the Georgia Department of Labor, and are displayed in Table 6. Wages for the South Georgia area are typically less than the Georgia average.

Table 6: Georgia Wage Survey (October 2009)

Occupation	Entry Wage (\$ per hour)	Average Wage (\$ per hour)	Median Wage (\$ per hour)	Middle Range	
				25 th %	75 th %
Speech-Language Pathologist	19.96	30.35	28.97	23.26	36.59

Source: Georgia Department of Labor, <http://explorer.dol.state.ga.us/mis/Current/wagesurveycurrent.pdf>

X. Capacity at VSU to Accommodate this Program

The program will be entirely hosted by the VSU Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders; it will be necessary to either hire additional faculty members or redirect current faculty to teach in this program. Table 7 is an analysis of the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders' seat and room capacity for Fall 2006-2009. According to this cursory review, an average of 77.2% of the total seats offered are actually being filled. With an average of 74.4% of available seats in classrooms being offered, the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders could possibly fill courses to room capacity, thus freeing some instructors could teach in the doctorate program. Therefore, the department may find it necessary to hire faculty to accommodate this new program and/or find another building or room to accommodate the increased number of students in the program.

Table 7: Semester Course and Room Capacity Analysis for COMD and CSD Courses

Fall Semester	Number of Seats Taken	Number of Total Seats Available	Room Capacity	Percent of Seats Taken	Percent of Room Capacity Offered
2006	547	736	1029	74.3%	71.5%
2007	656	746	1077	87.9%	69.3%
2008	536	755	963	71.0%	78.4%
2009	570	755	963	75.5%	78.4%

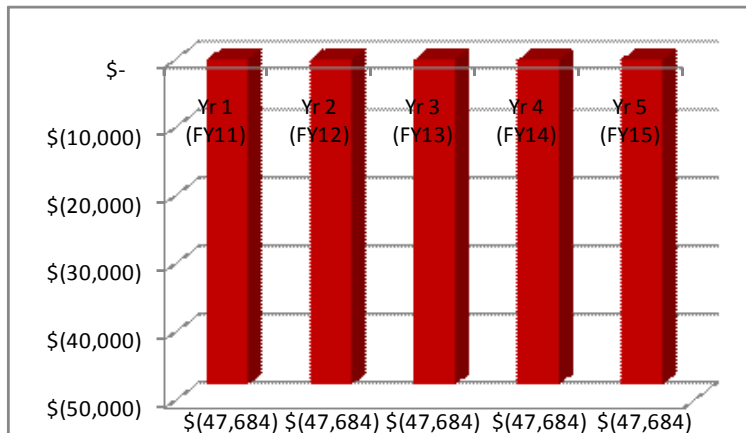
Source: VSU Office of Strategic Research and Analysis, July 2009.

Table 8 contains the possible costs associated with initiating a Doctorate in Speech-Language Pathology (SLPD) degree program. The analysis is based on a new faculty member being hired, and 12 new students each year for years one through five. Also, the average credit hours calculated for each student was nine. As illustrated, if one assistant professor is hired at the CUPA median salary for SLPD, the institution would generate a deficit of \$47,684 annually. To offset the additional costs of a full-time faculty member, cohort sizes of 30 new students each year would be needed. If no new faculty members are hired, this program does have the potential to generate a positive net income for the institution.

Table 8: Cost/Benefit Analysis for a Doctorate of Speech-Language Pathology Degree

Analysis to Expand Enrollment - Speech-Language Pathology (SLPD)

Expenses (per academic year):	Yr 1 (FY11)	Yr 2 (FY12)	Yr 3 (FY13)	Yr 4 (FY14)	Yr 5 (FY15)
Personnel					
Course Release	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Permanent Faculty	\$ 55,750	\$ 55,750	\$ 55,750	\$ 55,750	\$ 55,750
Temporary Faculty (1/2 of a FT)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Program Coordinator/Secretary	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Benefits	\$ 22,513	\$ 22,513	\$ 22,513	\$ 22,513	\$ 22,513
Graduate Assistants (\$10k/yr)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Direct Administrative Costs ex. salary for asst. dean, dept. chair	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Operating Expenses ex. travel, office supplies, equipment	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000
Total Program Expenses	\$ 81,263	\$ 81,263	\$ 81,263	\$ 81,263	\$ 81,263
Fixed Costs ex. inst'l support, student services	\$ 28,449	\$ 28,449	\$ 28,449	\$ 28,449	\$ 28,449
TOTAL COSTS	\$ 109,712	\$ 109,712	\$ 109,712	\$ 109,712	\$ 109,712
Income (per academic year):	Yr 1 (FY11)	Yr 2 (FY12)	Yr 3 (FY13)	Yr 4 (FY14)	Yr 5 (FY15)
State appropriation (instruction) and tuition	\$ 49,086	\$ 49,086	\$ 49,086	\$ 49,086	\$ 49,086
Total Income from Instruction	\$ 49,086	\$ 49,086	\$ 49,086	\$ 49,086	\$ 49,086
State appropriation (other support)	\$ 28,449	\$ 28,449	\$ 28,449	\$ 28,449	\$ 28,449
Program specific fee	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Student fees	\$ 15,720	\$ 15,720	\$ 15,720	\$ 15,720	\$ 15,720
Total Other Monies Entering VSU	\$ 44,169	\$ 44,169	\$ 44,169	\$ 44,169	\$ 44,169
Less TAP students	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Less 15% capital risk	\$ (15,507)	\$ (15,507)	\$ (15,507)	\$ (15,507)	\$ (15,507)
Total Reductions	\$ (15,507)	\$ (15,507)	\$ (15,507)	\$ (15,507)	\$ (15,507)
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 77,748	\$ 77,748	\$ 77,748	\$ 77,748	\$ 77,748
TOTAL INC./COST (excl. stu fees)	\$ (47,684)	\$ (47,684)	\$ (47,684)	\$ (47,684)	\$ (47,684)
REALLOCATED FUNDING	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
NET	\$ (47,684)	\$ (47,684)	\$ (47,684)	\$ (47,684)	\$ (47,684)



Year	Students
Year 1	12
Year 2	12
Year 3	12
Year 4	12
Year 5	12

XI. Summary

The demand for a Doctorate of Speech-Language Pathology does not seem to be high in the State of Georgia, only recently have enrollment numbers reached the hundreds. Valdosta State University has the highest enrollment for the field so offering a doctorate degree at VSU would be an ideal location for a logical progression of an advanced degree and a population of students that would be interested in seeking an advanced degree. The number of awarded master and doctoral degrees in Communication Sciences and Disorders average 112 degrees per year within USG. Because VSU currently offers a Master of Education in Communication Sciences and Disorders, adjusting faculty course load to teach at the doctoral level may make this program feasible. By not hiring a new faculty member, this program would generate a net income for the institution; if a new faculty member is hired, the program will generate a loss. If this program were developed, it could fill a niche by offering a Doctorate of Speech-Language Pathology at a regional institution for those students desiring to continue education in this field.